

SOME GOOD LOBBIES

Indiscriminate Attacks on Practice is Not Justifiable.

SAFE GUARDS LEGISLATION

Enables Minority To Present Case To Congress In Forceful Manner—Prevents Sensation Mingers From Directing the Course of Legislation.

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 14, 1907.—The resignation of Senator Spooner, of Wisconsin, calls attention to how few men sever their connection with that body during their terms. It is nothing unusual for a Senator to decline a reelection, but seldom do they retire with any part of their term to their credit. There have been a number of such instances, however, in the past, probably more before the civil war than since. This is partly explained that the position of a Senator is growing more and more attractive from the standpoint of prestige and influence. Its membership increases very slowly, while the population of the country, its wealth and the civil war were the most dramatic business are increasing by leaps and bounds. The two Senators from New York, for instance, represent about as many people as the entire Senate at its organization.

The resignations at the outbreak of the civil war were the most dramatic. Next in public interest were those of Conkling and Platt. Since then only few Senators have resigned except to assume other political offices. Sherman, Blake, Carlisle and others resigned to enter cabinets; Fairbanks resigned to become Vice-President. Ex-Senator Clark, of Montana, once signed, but as he was serving under an appointment, the legality of which was questioned, that scarcely counts, signed, but he was under indictment. It is probable the late Senator Mitchell, of Oregon, would also have resigned had he not died first. Of all the motives by which Senators have been actuated in resigning it is not known now that any save Spooner, have bluntly stated that they did so to increase their income. That resignations are not more on this account speaks well for the Membership of the Senate, for many of them are poor men. Scarcely one could not increase his income if he were so inclined, either by returning to private life or by accepting employment while in the Senate, yet the Senator who becomes wealthy while in that body is the rare exception.

On the House side it will be remembered that both Speaker Reed and Speaker Hendershott resigned to take up the practice of law. Reed was not losing much, if anything, as Speaker. During Hendershott's four years as Speaker, he spent probably \$10,000 a year more than his salary, which made large inroads on his modest fortune. Both these died within a few years after their retirement and neither left much of an estate.

A question of interest at this time is whether ex-Senator Spooner will join the "lobby" in Washington. One would think that it would be perfectly reputable for an ex-Senator or an ex-Representative, to practice before Congress. Take Mr. Spooner's case. He has been a distinguished Senator for years. He has delved deeply into

many national problems and has elucidated them before his associates and the country at large. Just why he should be debarred from appearing before committees of Congress and arguing a case in behalf of his clients,

merely because he was paid to do so, does not appear any more than that a judge, resigning from the bench, should be forbidden to practice law in the courts. Yet if Mr. Spooner should attempt to do so, he will be subjected to all sorts of unfavorable criticism, termed a "lobbyist," and be classed with ex-Senator Jones, ex-Senator Thurston, ex-Senator Faulkner and others, who represent special interests here from time to time. In this connection it is somewhat remarkable that those who object to "lobbying" and encourage sensational lawyers to inflame the country against them, never distinguish between those who attempt to inflame legislation in an open and reputable manner, and those who pursue other tactics, except to attack except to attack the reputable men and let the others go free. For example, Mr. Faulkner never made any secret of the fact that he was employed by certain railroads when the railroad rate bill was under consideration. He appeared before committees, filed briefs, presented and examined witnesses, gave out interviews and completed statements which were presented to members of Congress and to the public in general. On the other hand, Judge Cowan, of Texas, quite as able an attorney as Mr. Faulkner, pursued the same course, as did also Mr. E. P. Bacon, of Milwaukee, who represented hay and grain shippers, as Judge Faulkner did the cattlemen, yet Senator Faulkner is called the "lobbyist," and denounced in no unmeasured terms while no unfavorable reference

is made to the others. It would seem a fair proposition that the railroads should be permitted to present their case to the congress, and to the public in the same manner that the shippers of hay and grain are. There is practically no subject of importance before Congress that is not supported by some interests and opposed by others. The pure food legislation is a case in point. The agitation for pure food law was headed by the Department of Agriculture and supported by Associations in all parts of the country, appealing to the press in the most sensational manner by extravagant charges against the manufacture of food products. The latter had millions of dollars invested in their business, and they did not wish to sit idly by while professional agitators and sensation mongers drove Congress to extreme legislation, consequently they appeared in person and by attorneys; the subject was threshed out some years before Congressional committees, and in the end a pretty fair law was enacted. The manufacturers did not succeed in protecting their interests as fully as they wished, nor did the agitators get all they asked for, but no manufacturer is going to be put out of business by the law, if he chooses to comply with its terms, and the agitation certainly produced some good results. Some manufacturers hoped that means of a pure law, worded to suit them, they would obtain certain trade advantages over their competitors, and fell in behind the advocates of the bill.

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